



PSC NEWS

Missouri Public Service Commission

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NATURAL GAS SAFETY

Jefferson City (April 15, 2004)---Spring is here and with it traditionally begins the season for increased excavation activities including many planned activities in and around your yard. The Missouri Public Service Commission reminds customers and businesses to call before they dig in their own yard or when excavating for a commercial project. Enclosed is information on calling before you dig.

In addition, the Commission once again reminds customers what to do if they smell natural gas. Information regarding that subject is enclosed as well.

Additional information materials on these topics can be obtained by calling the Commission's toll-free hotline number 1-800-392-4211.

DIG SAFE. DIG SMART. KNOW MISSOURI'S GROUND RULES.

MAKE THE CALL

Many utility company facilities, including natural gas pipelines, are located underground and out of sight. If you plan to dig in your own yard or excavate for a commercial project, Missouri law requires that you notify Missouri One Call System at 1-800-DIG-RITE (344-7483). However, not all utilities are members of Missouri One Call, so you will need to contact those non-members directly before you dig.

WAIT THE REQUIRED AMOUNT OF TIME

Missouri law requires that any person making or beginning any excavation notify all underground facility owners that may be affected by the excavation, at least 2 but not more than 10 working days in advance, except in case of an emergency. After you make the call, facility owners will determine if the planned dig is near any underground facilities. If needed, they will survey and mark the area where utility lines are located. **Do not begin digging until all of the utilities in the area have been located and marked.**

RESPECT THE MARKS

After it is determined that markings are required, the facility owner will dispatch a field locator who will locate and mark the excavation site with paint, stakes, or flags. Utilities mark their facilities according to specific guidelines and color codes. **Respect the markings when you dig.**

DIG SAFELY

Digging carelessly can cause disruption of vital utility services and environmental damage, or even loss of life. **Become a partner in damage prevention and DIG SAFELY.**

(More)

REMINDER OF WHAT TO DO IF YOU SMELL NATURAL GAS

BE CAREFUL

Evacuate the building immediately.

Do not operate electrical switches.

Do not smoke, use lighters, matches or any other open flame.

Do not start your vehicle if it is in an attached garage.

OTHER TIPS

Go to a neighbor's house and call your local natural gas company to report the odor and its approximate location.

Do not call from inside your house. Calling from a phone inside your home could create a spark that could cause an explosion.

If your service is disrupted for any reason, please make sure that a trained professional relights your pilot flames.

THE ODOR

Natural gas itself does not have an odor -- an odorant has been added so gas can be detected if a leak occurs. The odor is similar to the smell of "rotten eggs."